



PO Box 71 Lebanon, CT 06249 Phone: 860 948-0432 [www.timproct.org](http://www.timproct.org)

March 6, 2009

**Testimony in Opposition to the following Bill:**

**Raised Bill No. 6616: AN ACT ESTABLISHING WOOD SMOKE TO BE A PUBLIC NUISANCE**

Submitted by: Joan Nichols – President Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc.

*Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc. is a non-profit trade Association representing the interests of the Connecticut forest products industry.*

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Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee:

Wood as an alternative heat source has a long standing tradition in Connecticut. It is important under these economic times to provide the citizens of the state of Connecticut with affordable alternatives to fossil fuels for their heating source. The astronomical increase in fuel oil prices in 2008 caused many Connecticut citizens to seek wood as an alternative heating source.

Wood is a renewable resource readily available in Connecticut. A vast majority of the firewood that is utilized in Connecticut is harvested in conjunction with timber harvesting operations. The harvesting of firewood from Connecticut woodlots allows for a more thorough utilization of the trees harvested, while providing the forest land owner with additional income. Firewood is also harvested in conjunction with Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) sales that are designed to improve overall stand quality under a long term forest management plan.

In reviewing the state health code it does not appear that wood smoke could be construed as having similar health threats to the general public as some of the other issues that are addressed in the code such as spoiled or diseased meat, stagnant water, sewage etc.

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Associations strongly urges the defeat of this bill so that the citizens of Connecticut may continue to utilize wood as a renewable, alternative source of heat for their homes. Firewood utilization is critical to the management of Connecticut's forest land while reducing our dependence on foreign oil.